



MEALS on WHEELS
WESTERN MICHIGAN



**SUMMER
2023**

**FOOD FOR
THOUGHT**

PRESIDENT & CEO UPDATE



GREETINGS,

Hoping all of you are enjoying these summer months with your friends and families. Here at MOWWM, we have good news to celebrate!

I am pleased to announce that we have been accepted into the Food is Medicine Coalition's Medically Tailored Meals Accelerator program. This 12-month fellowship program will build our capacity to produce Medically Tailored Meals in our kitchen. This is important to move our vision of a community where no senior is hungry or forgotten forward. We don't want dietary restrictions to be a barrier to seniors who need our services. Nick Kepford, our Executive Chef, was hired to improve the quality and nutrition of our meals through more scratch cooking.

Paula Kerr, our Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, will provide the necessary nutrition expertise and nutrition counseling for this program.

A new advisory committee, Around The Table, is also being rolled out this summer. Around the Table will allow seniors to have a voice in the meals we provide and give us a new lens on thoughts and ideas related to our meals. This program will meet in person quarterly and will consist of seniors from each of our three programs.

As we continue to work to meet the increasing demand for services, you can help by giving your time volunteering, or contributing financially to help with the ever-increasing cost of food and labor. Together, we make a difference.

Warmly,

Lisa Wideman | *President and CEO*

RECIPE: Blueberry Five-Bean Salad

PREP TIME:
10 minutes

COOK TIME:
none

SERVING SIZE:
2 servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 15oz can red kidney beans
- 1 15oz can black beans
- 1 15oz can cut green beans
- 1 15oz can chickpeas
- 1 15oz can cannellini beans
- 1 cup corn, canned or thawed
- 1 medium red onion, chopped
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- Cilantro, chopped

For Dressing:

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup blueberry or grape juice
- 1 tsp mustard
- salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Drain and rinse all beans; add to a large bowl. Add corn, blueberries, onion, and cilantro; stir to combine.
2. In a jar, add all ingredients for the dressing. Put the top on the jar and shake until ingredients are mixed together. Pour over the salad; stir to combine
3. Serve with lime wedges and chips for dipping.

NOTES:

MAIN DISH

OUR FUTURE IS BRIGHT

NEW EXECUTIVE CHEF

Big changes are coming to the food at Meals on Wheels Western Michigan! It all starts in the kitchen with the new Executive Chef, Nick Kepford.



The Executive Chef role is new to MOWWM and there are three main benefits this addition brings to the community:

- Less processed, more homemade meals with improved flavor
- More opportunities to volunteer in the kitchen
- Better variety of meal options for cultural and medical needs

Why Chef Nick?

Chef Nick is an expert in scratch-cooking with experience in corporate settings, hospitals, and farm-to-table restaurants. Getting his start in Missoula, Montana, he cooked with nothing but local, raw ingredients for four years straight. Now, he is bringing his skills to MOWWM.

Chef Nick is already adding even more raw ingredients to the kitchen, reducing processed foods and packaging waste. This actually makes the food more flavorful, meaning the end-product is a meal that tastes homemade - because it is!

You deserve a homemade meal. You deserve to see first-hand what goes into your food. You deserve the best quality nutrition for your unique needs.

These are the goals of Meals on Wheels Western Michigan and Chef Nick knows how to achieve them. If you want to see for yourself what he's cooking, come take a personalized tour of the production house or even try volunteering in the kitchen! Call 616-459-3111 to schedule. Chef Nick is looking forward to working with you!



Did You Know?

MOWWM offers a variety of cut, minced and moist, and pureed meal options. If you have difficulty chewing and/or swallowing, you can order from a special menu to fit your needs. If you have difficulty cutting the meat in your meals, all our meals can come pre-cut as well. This is especially helpful if you have arthritis and is one of the many ways MOWWM ensures meals are accessible to all who need them.

SENIOR AND VOLUNTEER

Everyone involved with MOWWM (including you!) is part of an incredible community of giving and receiving. The connections between clients and volunteers often go far beyond the exchange of food. Seniors receiving home-delivered meals were recently asked to share special moments they've had with their delivery drivers, and we were blown away by the response. Hopefully you are as inspired by the following story as we were:



Every week, rain, shine, chemo treatment, or ice storm, Louise volunteers her time delivering meals and so much more to seniors on her route in Western Michigan.

Joyce is one of the seniors that looks forward to seeing Louise's smiling face each

Friday. Although she thinks the food is wonderful, the conversations with her drivers are what have been the most important for Joyce.

You may recall one Friday this past winter, there was a terrible storm that left 3 inches of ice covering everything. Joyce worried that Louise wouldn't be able to make it up her icy driveway, so she came up with a plan! She would be waiting in her garage during her normal delivery time and would lower a sled down her driveway for Louise to put her meals in.

To Joyce's surprise, despite the ice, Louise arrived at her front door earlier than expected, with a smile on her face and meals in hand. After their visit, it was time for Louise to get back down the driveway. She got down on all fours and slid down the driveway back to her car, laughing it off, saying she does this with her grandkids all the time. When she got to the bottom, Joyce recalls Louise getting up like a gymnast at the end of a routine, smiling and waving.

Louise could have easily decided not to drive her route that icy day, especially because she was still recovering from a treatment for her stage 4 breast cancer earlier that week, which left her more tired than usual. However, delivering her route feeds her soul and she loves the people, so she got out there like it was any normal Friday. Moments like these mean a great deal to Joyce, especially because she lives alone and has experienced a lot of loss in her 72 years.

There are an endless number of ways you could choose to spend your day. Knowing that Louise is a busy wife, mother, and grandmother makes Joyce appreciate her and the time she gives even more, describing her as

"a treasure and true friend".

Louise always takes the time to talk, and she and Joyce share stories about their families and their faith. They laugh together a lot. Joyce loves to share stories of her 2-year-old grandson, Leo, because they always make

SPOTLIGHT

Louise laugh. They also cry together. Joyce is no stranger to cancer, having lost both her husband and daughter to battles with the disease. Chances are, you have also been affected by the devastating toll cancer can take.



“We’ve talked before about how cancer does not define her. Her love of giving to

other people and her joy are so apparent. I don’t think of her as a cancer patient, I think of her as a survivor and a driver. You may think these jobs are not that important, but she has made such an impact on my life.” recalls Joyce. “I’ve been able to meet this incredible new friend, who just happens to be a Meals on Wheels driver.”

Thank you to everyone who is a part of this beautiful community. Whether you are a volunteer, donor, or recipient, you are making an impact on the lives of others.

You never know the power a simple knock on a door can have on your life, and the life of someone else.



In Need of Volunteer Delivery Drivers

Are you looking for a rewarding way to spend your morning? Adopt a route for a day and come deliver meals and smiles to incredible local seniors like Joyce. Whether you just want to try it out once, or commit to a weekly route, we’d love to have you. All routes start and end at our facility in Grandville. Our friendly staff will lead you through a brief training before you hit the road. Routes are delivered Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, and typically last 2-3 hours. Check out mealsonwheelswesternmichigan.org/volunteer or give us a call at 616-459-3111 to sign up or learn more.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



You may have heard of Doyle & Ogden Insurance, a family-owned local independent insurance agency, but did you know they have been a trusted partner, friend, and supporter of MOWWM for the last 15 years? During that time, they have not only been MOWWM's insurance provider, but supported our seniors by donating, volunteering, and serving on the board.

Shannon Heads, VP of Doyle & Ogden Insurance, has been on the MOWWM board since 2020, and is currently serving as board chair.

Her grandfather started Doyle & Ogden Insurance back in 1958 and after his passing her father became involved.

Just like you, Shannon is passionate about helping seniors live independently in their homes and connecting them to the resources they need to maintain their physical and mental health.

“The fact that MOWWM keeps people in their homes with both the meals and wrap-around services is really important to me.”

Shannon's grandmother lived to be 102 and was able to stay in her home with the help of a family member moving in to care for her. She also recognizes that caregivers need support too and is grateful MOWWM can offer that support.

While she has been involved with many different aspects of MOWWM, Shannon's favorite experience so far has been helping to grow Chef's Specialty, our signature evening fundraising event, and deepen its roots in the community. This fall will mark the 9th Chef's Specialty, and she hopes to see you there! You can learn more about Chef's Specialty on the last page of this newsletter.

Thank you, Shannon, and the whole Doyle & Ogden Insurance team for the many ways you support MOWWM and our vision of a community where no senior is hungry or forgotten.



Senior Pantry Donations Needed!

Food donations are appreciated year-round, not just during our Fall Food Drive. Our pantry has seen an increase in demand since the end of the COVID SNAP benefits earlier this year, leaving many of our shelves bare. Donations of peanut butter, canned fruits and vegetables, cereal, and reusable bags are needed most.

Contact (616) 459-3111 or info@mowwm.org for drop-off locations and times.

Invites You to the 9th Annual



Chef's Specialty



Celebration, Dinner, Drinks, & Competition

Join us for an evening of delicious cuisine while we honor local community leader George Aquino and celebrate local seniors living with independence and dignity. This year's event will also feature a recipe competition among local chefs, with a chance to taste the winning recipes at the VIP Reception & Recipe Tasting. Stay tuned for online viewing of the recipes and community voting this summer!

WHEN: October 11, 2023

VIP Reception & Recipe Tasting is from 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm
and Main Event is 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm.

WHERE: The High Five GR

TICKETS: \$125 for Main Event or \$175 for Main Event + VIP Reception & Recipe Tasting. Young professional ticket price is \$75 for Main Event or \$125 for Main Event + VIP Reception & Recipe Tasting.

DRESS: Business Casual



Scan this QR code to buy tickets and cast your vote for the best recipe!



Are you looking for a meaningful volunteer opportunity? Look no further!

Volunteers are an essential piece of our vision of a community where no senior is hungry or forgotten. We welcome individuals and groups for a variety of flexible volunteer opportunities including:

- Delivery Driver
- Kitchen Helper
- Pantry Assistant
- Bag Decorater
- Community Dining Site Assistant
- Administrative Assistant
- Emergency Box Assembly

Check out mealsonwheelswesternmichigan.org/volunteer or give us a call at (616) 459-3111 to sign up or learn more.

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Meals on Wheels Western Michigan is supported by:

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